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Identifying Open Access Articles within the Top Ten Closed Access LIS Journals: A Global Perspective

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Abstract

Librarians have embraced the open access movement. They work to raise awareness of issues surrounding scholarly communication, to educate faculty about authors' rights, and to help implement and maintain institutional repositories (IRs). But for all of the research and commentary from librarians about the importance of IRs and of making research freely available, there still exists the glaring contradiction that few librarians and Library and Information Science (LIS) authors provide free access to their own research publications. In this study, we will look at the open access availability of articles from the top 20 closed access LIS journals and discuss some factors that may explain the discrepancies between LIS authors' attitudes towards open access and their own self-archiving practices.

Keywords

Open access articles, LIS journals, Institutional repositories, Self-archiving

Introduction

There is a considerable body of literature dealing with the expanding definition and implications of open access information. The open access movement is commonly thought to have begun with the Budapest Open Access Initiative in 2002 when the phrase open access originated and the concepts of self-archiving and open-access journals were introduced (<http://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/read>). The Bethesda statement (2003) emphasized scientific publishing and included statements from funding agencies, libraries, publishers, and scientists regarding a new open access model of publishing. <http://legacy.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/bethesda.htm>). The Berlin declaration (2003) broadened the OA conversation even more to the freedom of information and using the Internet to globally disseminate knowledge (<http://openaccess.mpg.de/Berlin-Declaration>). This more inclusive definition was also used by Peter Suber who stated that "open access literature (OA) is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright licensing restrictions" (2013, p.1).

Open access literature can be divided into three types: gold, green, and hybrid. Gold open access can be accessed free of charge by the user and may include some type of pay model for the author. The color green is used to designate closed access journals that allow some form of the article (i.e. pre-print or post-print) to be self-archived by the author. Hybrid journals give authors the option of paying to have the full versions of their articles from a closed access journal made freely available to users (Joshi, Vatnal, & Manjunath, 2012). According to the SHERPA/RoMEO database which lists publishers' self-archiving policies, "76% of the 1818

publishers on their list allow some form of self- archiving” (2015), making it much easier for faculty authors to archive their articles in institutional repositories or subject repositories (SRs).

Opinions and Practice of Open Access

There have been a number of studies conducted about LIS authors’ attitudes regarding OA publishing and these three types of access models. Peterson (2006) polled 100 published LIS authors about their opinions and concerns about publishing in an OA journal. She discovered that permanence, credibility, and acceptability for promotion and tenure were found to be major factors in choosing a journal for publication, and these factors seemed to strengthen authors’ preference for print LIS literature and away from publishing in gold OA journals. “Forty-one percent of those surveyed thought that OA free access on the Internet was not important (Peterson, 2006, p.6).

Carter, Snyder, & Imre (2005) conducted an online survey with responses from 140 academic library faculty from 10 research libraries across the country about their attitudes and experiences with scholarly communication. Concerns about choosing a journal in which to publish were related to the promotion and tenure process and included things such as the review period of the journal, as well as its reputation and peer-review status. “Almost one-half indicated that their primary concern was the publication of their articles and that a publisher’s copyright and intellectual property policies were not considered in selecting a journal for article submission (Carter, Snyder, & Imre 2005, p.77).

(Palmer, Dill, & Christie, 2009) found that “librarians support the concepts of open access, and more important, believe that these concepts are related to their work as librarians” (p.328).

Open Access Initiatives

Academic institutions have been taking different approaches in terms of their open access initiatives. In general, open access initiatives can encourage through a resolution, direct through a policy, or require a through a mandate that faculty deposit their research articles in their institutional repository. The University of Kansas was the first public university to adopt an OA resolution in 2005 and then a campus-wide OA policy in 2009. (<http://policy.ku.edu/governance/open-access-policy>) In 2008 Harvard University adopted an OA policy that brought lot of media attention as the first university-level OA mandate within the United States to be adopted by faculty rather than administrators (<http://legacy.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/03-02-08.htm>).

Librarians surveyed were hesitant to publish in OA journals or to self-archive their articles and yet, “When asked if they would deposit copies of their articles in an institutional or subject-based repository, if mandated by their institution, the overwhelming majority (89 percent) indicated that they would do so willingly (Carter, Snyder, & Imre 2005 p.74).

Another identified way to increase the use of the institutional repositories is to mediate the submission process through some type of liaison system such as having a librarian, staff member or student submit the article for the faculty member (Xia, 2007). Librarians have even gone so far as to study faculty work habits to develop ways to make self- archiving in IRs as user friendly to faculty as possible (Foster, Gibbons, 2005). Xia (2007) posits that “institutional repositories need a mandate policy to ensure success”(p.653).

Open Access and Library and Information Science Literature

There is a surprisingly limited amount of information available about gold OA LIS journals and the self-archiving practices of librarians and LIS professionals. Way (2010) used Google Scholar to look at the OA availability of top 20 LIS journals from 2007. He “found OA versions of only 27% of the LIS articles examined” (p.306). Xia, Wilhoite, Myers (2010) examined the OA availability of the top 20 ranked LIS journals from 2006 looking more specifically comparing the self-archiving practices of LIS faculty vs. librarians. They found that “librarians are not more likely to self-archive than LIS faculty” (p.800). Mercer (2011) analyzed LIS peer-reviewed journals published in 2008, looking at OA availability and availability by academic librarians compared with other authors. Out of a total of 3,873 articles, she found that 1574 (40%) were open access and out of that number “almost 49 percent of academic librarian authors’ articles were available open access (p.497). Mercer (2011) also noted that LIS authors self-archiving of their work would not have been hindered by publishers’ policies; that “sixty-eight percent, or 2665 could have been open access based on publisher policies on self-archiving and copyright” (p.448).

Increase of OA Journals

There has been dramatic growth in the number of open access journals available in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) over the past five years. In August 2008, DOAJ included 3,5887 journals (<http://poeticeconomics.blogspot.com/2008/08/doaj-growth-rate-nearly-doubles-in-past.html>). By early 2015, the number has been more than doubled to include 10,319 journals of which 6,165 are searchable at article level. (<http://doaj.org/faq>).

There has also been an increase in the number of campus institutional repositories. According to Registry of Open Access Repository Mandates and Policy (ROARMAP), there are 119 institutions listed within the United States, while we found 88 institutions located in just the United Kingdom and Northern Island with an Open Access Mandates & Policy (2015).

This increase in the availability of open access literature prompted us to conduct this study to determine if this trend of limited OA availability of LIS literature has continued. We looked at the open access availability of library and information science literature in the top ten closed access journals from SciMago and JCR. In addition to updating the OA availability of top LIS

journals by journal and publisher, we also wanted to differentiate between self-archiving practices in SRs, IRs, and faculty web pages by country.

Methodology

In this study, the authors evaluated the open access availability of library and information science literature. We started by analyzing the top 100 library science journals (the top 50 journals from Scimago Journal & Country Rank and ISI's Journal Citation Report (JCR). In an attempt to find gold open access journals within the top 100 journals in LIS literature, we found that only nine journals were listed as gold open access journals in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). Finding very few gold open access journals, we then started investigating the availability of open access articles from the top 10 closed access journals. We evaluated the ten top ranked closed access journals both from Scimago and JCR and then evaluated open access availability of journal articles from various sources.

Ten top ranked closed access journals were selected from the JCR 2012 list since "JCR takes a consecutive two-to-three year period to calculate journal impact factor" (Xia, Wilhoite & Myers, 2011, p. 794). Other 10 top journals were selected from Scimago's 2013 library & Information Science list. Scimago Journal Rank Indicator, developed from the information contained in the Elsevier's Scopus database, offers essential information for more than 1700 scholarly and professional journals (Jacso, 2010).

As shown in the table 1, 20 journals were analyzed from different commercial publishers and university publishers with a decent impact factor. A few journals analyzed for this study from both the JCR and Scimago lists originated from countries outside of United States. E-content, a non-peer reviewed trade publication was also included in this list. Only research articles were examined from these 20 journals. Editorials and reviews were excluded from this study. A total of 1048 articles were investigated from 20 journals from Library & Information Science literature. Every article was searched manually in Google Scholar to identify the open access availability of the article.

TABLE 1
Percentage of OA Articles by Journal

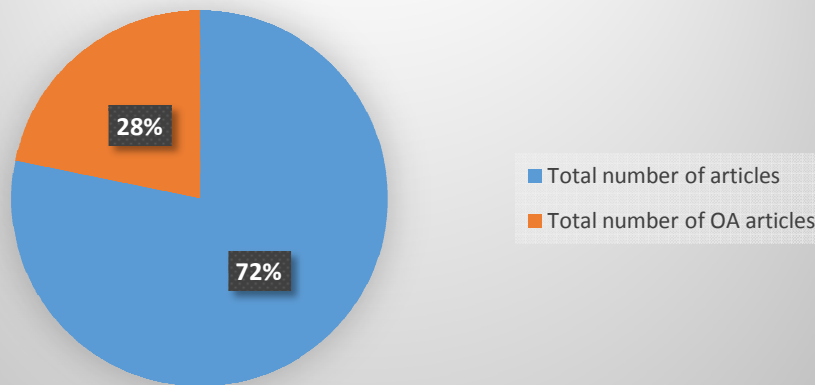
Journal Title	Publisher	Total # of Articles	% of OA Articles
1. African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science	African Journals Online	15	6%
2. Aslib proceedings	Emerald Group Publishing	34	32%
3. Australian Academic &	Taylor & Francis	26	15%

Research Libraries	Online		
4. Australian Library Journal	Taylor & Francis Online	20	25%
5. Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science	University of Toronto Press Journals	16	6%
6. ACM SIGMIS Database	ACM DL Digital Library	14	7%
7. Econtent		106	0%
8. Electronic Library	Emerald Group Publishing	49	22%
9. Ethics and Information Technology	Springer	22	45%
10. European Journal of Information Systems	Palgrave Mcmillan	43	2%
11. Information Systems Research	Informa Pub Online	58	31%
12. Journal of Informetrics	Elsevier	95	42%
13. Reference Librarian	Taylor & Francis Online	25	12%
14. Library & Information Science Research	Elsevier	36	16%
15. Information Systems Journal	Wiley Online Library	23	8%
16. Journal of the American Society for Information Science & Technology	Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T)	173	45%
17. Reference Services Review	Emerald Group Publishing	39	10%
18. Scientometrics	Springer	204	41%
19. Collection Management	Taylor & Francis Online	17	23%
20. Journal of Library Administration	Taylor & Francis Online	33	24%

Data Analysis & Findings

While investigating a total of 1048 journal articles from the top 20 journals published in 2013, 292 articles were found to be available openly from various sources. In other words, 27.86% articles from 20 closed access journals were open access articles.

Figure 1
Open Access Availability



While looking at this data more closely, we realized that articles were available from various types of sources. Open access availability of the articles was dependent on the journal. As the number of articles published in each journal varied widely, so did the

availability of its articles.

Open Access Availability

Open access availability was found in all closed access journals we examined except one non-peer reviewed magazine. It was interesting to find out that there was no availability of open access articles from a total of 106 articles published in the trade publication titled Econtent in 2013. For the rest of the 19 journals, the percentage of open access articles was larger within a journal when the total number of articles was larger within the given year. For example, 204 articles were published in Scientometrics, and 173 articles were published in Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology (JASIS) journals. The availability of 84 (41%) articles from Scientometrics and 78 (45%) articles from JASIS as open access were found to be the maximum number of open access articles among 20 selected journals.

Figure 2
Open Access Availability by Journal

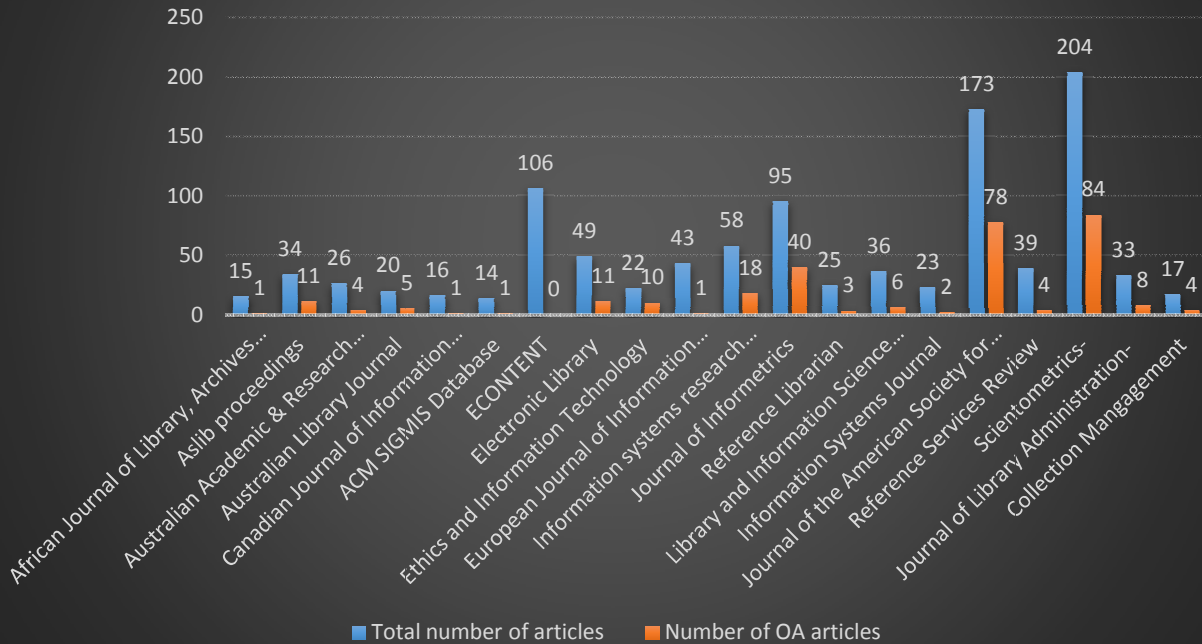
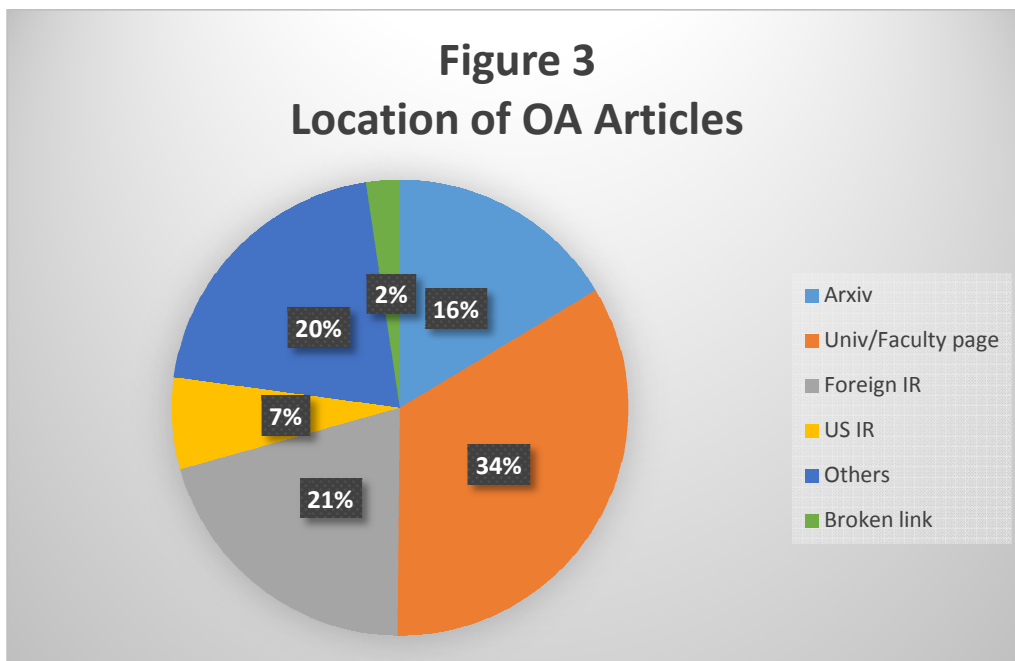


Figure 3
Location of OA Articles



Subject Repository/Arxiv

Initially, it was our intention to categorize articles identified from different subject repositories. To our surprise, we didn't find any articles from LIS repositories such as dLIST or E-LIS. We only found them in Arxiv which is a subject repository mainly for physics, mathematics, computer science, biology and finance and statistics. The majority of the Arxiv articles were located in three journals: Journal of Infometrics, Journals of the American Society for Information Science, and Scientometrics.

Way (2010) also found low use of LIS subject repositories in his study; 5 percent of OA articles were found in E-LIS and 7 percent in dLIST (p.306).

Faculty/Researcher pages

As it is noticable from the above pie chart, most of the open access articles (34%) were found from faculty members' or scientists' personal or university webpages. It was encouraging to see that professors around the world are taking this step to increase the visibility of their own scholarship. The academic culture also played a role in increasing the visibility of an article. Anecdotally we found that faculty members and researchers who are early in their career made an effort to make their scholarship more visible to the rest of the research community. Many articles were found from universities outside of the United States, namely from research institutions in Taiwan, and the Max Planck Institute in Germany.

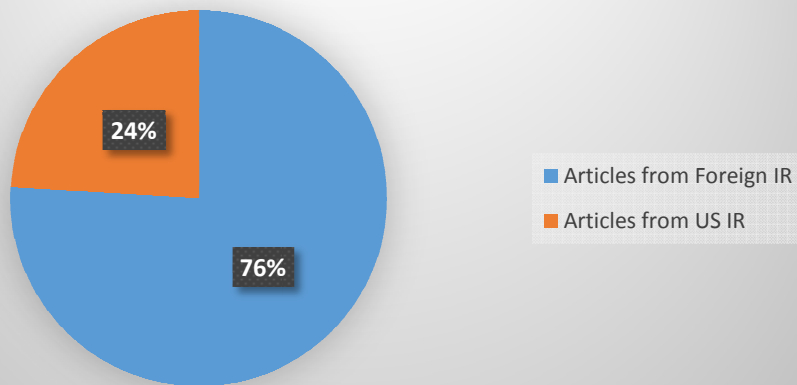
Articles from Different Repositories

We located open access articles from institutional repositories across the world. We found close to 80 articles which comprised about 28% of our total open access articles from different institutional repositories. Among the articles from IRs, more than 75% were found to be from IRs outside of the United States. A total of only 19 articles were found from IRs within the United States which confirms that faculty research output is not finding its way into institutional repositories in the United States.

(<http://www.dlib.org/dlib/september07/mcdowell/09mcdowell.html>)

Repositories Within the United States

Figure 4
OA Articles from different IRs



Open access articles were found from several repositories within the US. However, most of the time articles were located from repositories from a research one institution or institutions that have taken a leadership in the open access

movement. For example, we found articles from the University of California, Purdue University, Florida State University, and the University of Nebraska's institutional repositories. Ideally, we expected to detect more articles from US repositories. Very few articles were found in medium size institutions such as East Carolina University, Portland State University, and the University of North Carolina, Greensboro.

Repositories Outside the United States

Many open access articles were found from different repositories across the world. The table below shows articles found from different countries and continents. It clearly highlights that the usage of repositories is gaining more momentum outside the United States especially in Australia, the United Kingdom, and a few other European countries.

Table 2 Articles found from Repositories around the World	
Univ. IR/Archive	Country/Continent
Univ. of Wollongong	Australia/Australia
Univ of Hasselt	Belgium/Europe
Delft University	Netherlands/Europe
University of Dublin	South Africa/Africa
University of Helsinki	Finland/Europe
University of Denmark	Denmark/Europe
University of Chile	Chile/South America
PORTO-Open Repository	Italy/Europe

University of Boras	Sweden/Europe
HAL Archive	France/Europe
Dublin Institute of Technology	South Africa/Africa
University of Essex	England/Europe
Aalborg University	UK/Europe
University of Surrey	UK/Europe
White Rose Research Online	UK/Europe
Charles Darwin University	Australia/Australia
Spanish National Research Council	Spain/Europe
University of Granada	Spain/Europe
University of Pretoria	South Africa/Africa
University of Queensland	Australia/Australia
Kyoto University	Japan/Asia
Munich University	Germany/Europe

Academia.edu, Research Gate, & Others

We identified a good number of articles from the Academia.edu and Researchgate websites which are platforms for faculty researchers to share their research with their peers. This again indicates that faculty researchers are willing to share their articles to collaborate and connect with their colleagues, peers, and co-authors within their field. It also raised the question why faculty researchers are more comfortable sharing their research output within a social media platform than within their own institutional repositories.

Xia (2007) pointed out the reluctance of faculty researchers to self-archive their articles. Similarly, the results from our study raises the question of whether the benefit of self-archiving within their institutional repositories is unclear to the LIS researcher. This uncertainty may lead researchers to publish their articles on their own website or through larger research sharing platforms. It also indicates that within the U.S., librarians need to be more proactive on their respective campuses to explain the usability and usefulness of an institutional repository to campus faculty members.

Very few articles were found from publishers' page, and few were found from the Springer website. A few articles were found from the NIH website, probably as a result of NIH public access policy (<http://publicaccess.nih.gov/>) that mandates that all peer-reviewed journal articles published as a result of NIH grant funds be made freely available through PubMed Central (PMC), the digital archive of biomedical and life sciences journal literature. Even fewer articles appeared as a broken link from a Google Scholar search.

Conclusion

Only about 28% (292) of the 1048 articles from the top Library & Information Science literature that were reviewed for this article are open access in some form. We have re-established the fact that Australia, the UK, and a few other European countries have taken the lead in making articles available through different digital repositories.

While providing access to information is librarians' most critical duty and responsibility, this article points to the discouraging fact that we as LIS authors have failed, whether through SRs, IRs, or personal websites, to make our own articles open access. Librarians and other types of LIS authors have similar priorities to faculty authors in other disciplines. They are concerned with publishing in journals acceptable for promotion and tenure and not with making their articles freely available. Even though according to SHERPA/RoMEO data that more than 76% of publishers allow some form of self-archiving, results from this study show that LIS authors do not see the importance of self-archiving their work.

Only a very few research institutions within the United States, those that were able to establish a campus-wide mandate or policy, were able to expand the accessibility of their articles while archiving them within their institutions. It is evident that articles from American research institutions such as Harvard University that pioneered an open access policy have become more visible within the worldwide research community. Only a handful of mid-size academic institutions have done a commendable job in terms of mandating or establishing an open access policy.

This study provides evidence that there is a compelling need to establish university-mandated OA policies that would result in the expansion of institutional repositories and in increased visibility for faculty scholarship, especially for LIS authors.

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